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SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID
STATE FOR TSUNAMI TASK FORCE 1
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DCHA/OFDA KISAACS, GGOTTLIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER, BDEEMER
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TSUNAMI RESPONSE MANAGEMENT TEAM

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GENEVA FOR USAID KYLOH
ROME PASS FODAG
NSC FOR MELINE
CDR USPACOM FOR J3/J4/POLAD
USEU PASS USEC

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MALDIVES - EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMIS: USAID/DART
SITREP #3

SUMMARY

1. According to the Maldives National Disaster Management Center (NDMC), as of January 18, the earthquake and tsunamis killed 82 people and 26 residents are missing in Maldives. The U.S. Military is prioritizing final operations in Maldives before its final departure. There is currently a shortage of health professionals in Maldives. The U.N. World Food Program (WFP) is currently conducting vulnerability assessments in Maldives and will provide 1,800 metric tons (MT) of rice and 450 MT of tuna to Maldives. End summary.

Death Tolls

2. According to the Maldives NDMC, as of January 23, the earthquake and tsunamis killed 82 people and 26 residents are missing in Maldives. As of January 23, 12,698 people are displaced in the islands.

Current Situation

3. On January 25, the USAID/Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) attended a briefing in Colombo on the situation in Maldives. The briefing was provided by the U.N. Resident Coordinator (UN RC) in Male' who stated that the earthquake and tsunamis had affected all 190 islands in Maldives and 87 resorts. The earthquake and tsunamis affected approximately 30 percent of the population, and an estimated 7 percent of the islands were totally destroyed. According to the UN RC, 37 percent of schools, 10 percent of houses, and 20 percent of tourist resorts need repairs.

4. The UN RC reported that since 90 percent of the islands have a population of 500 people or less, the cost of replacing infrastructure is prohibitive. The Government of the Republic of Maldives (GORM) is considering consolidating the population on fewer islands.

5. The U.N. Flash Appeal for Maldives was USD 65 million of which USD 25 million has been committed. The priorities for assistance are: shelter, livelihoods, health, water and sanitation, coordination and support services, and vulnerability and risk analysis. [Note: USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has provided USD 1,200,000 to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) for health, nutrition, and water and sanitation activities. End Note.] The UN RC emphasized the link between relief assistance and reconstruction to introduce new systems, housing designs, new approaches to social infrastructure (schools, clinics etc).

Coordination with the U.S. Military

6. According to the USAID/DART Field Officer (FO) located in Maldives, U.S. ships arrived in Laamu Atoll, Maldives on January 21, are scheduled to complete operations on January

29, and will depart Male on February 2. On January 25, the USAID/DART FO accompanied Brigadier General Frank Panter to Maabaidhoo, Mundoo, and Dhabidhoo islands in the Laamu Atoll to observe water production and distribution activities. The U.S. Military is in process of prioritizing final operations before their final departure.

Health

17. The USAID/DART FO reported that sectoral reconstruction planning is underway, and short-term health volunteers will arrive during the week of January 24. The USAID/DART FO stated that epidemiological surveillance shows no disease outbreaks. UNICEF is replacing cold chain equipment and all vaccines. Since Maldives relies heavily on expatriate doctors for regional hospitals, there are currently staffing gaps as many doctors have left their posts since the tsunami. Due to the shortage of health professionals in

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Maldives, several Thai volunteers will be arriving during the week of January 24. The U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) is working with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to resolve this shortage.

Food

18. WFP is working with the State Trading Organization and Ministry of Education (MOE) to distribute high protein biscuits in schools. WFP is conducting vulnerability assessments, and the results will be presented during the week of January 24. WFP will provide 1,800 MT of rice and 450 MT of tuna to Maldives, and the projected arrival of these goods is March 20.

Water and Sanitation

19. UNICEF and the Maldives Water and Sanitation Authority (MWSA) recently visited Laamu Atoll, tested the water, and proposed human waste disposal interventions to the MOH. UNICEF, Oxfam, and German non-governmental organization (NGO) Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) are donating reverse osmosis water purification units (ROWPUS), but a final decision on the placement of these units is still pending. According to the USAID/DART FO, water storage capacity on the islands is an issue as production capacity is greater than storage capacity.

Education

110. The USAID/DART FO reported that schools opened on January 25, and the distribution of textbooks has been completed. With the beginning of the school year, WFP will provide high protein biscuits to schools. An AusAid engineering team is visiting Dhaalu, Thaa, and Meemu atolls to assess the condition of school buildings.

Psycho-social Support

111. The GORM Social Support and Counseling Service (SSCS) is working with the American Red Cross and Global Relief, a South African NGO, to train counselors. Global Relief will also conduct training on how to identify and refer post-traumatic stress disorder. SSCS is working on a strategy to supplement its counseling program, as many counselors are volunteers who now must return to their regular jobs. As of January 23, 42 counselors have been trained in psycho-social support, and training of teachers in psycho-social support is also underway. As of January 23, 104 teachers in 7 atolls have been trained. Save the Children and UNICEF are working with SSCS on a two-year action plan.

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